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## ***SENATOR CARDIN CALLS MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS A THREAT TO U.S. HOMELAND SECURITY***

WASHINGTON – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today called the Mexican drug wars a “*serious threat to our nation’s homeland security and one that we must develop a strong, coordinated effort to defeat.*”

As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security, Senator Cardin today expressed serious concern at a Judiciary subcommittee hearing about the rising violence in Mexico and its expanded reach into the United States. These drug wars have become a serious threat to our nation’s homeland security and we must work together to develop a more effective strategy to combat this violence.

*“Lawlessness has become a way of life in Mexico and the spillover effect into the United States has been enormous and it cannot continue,” said **Senator Cardin**. “This is a shared responsibility between the U.S. government and the Mexican government. We must work together.*

More than 7,000 people have been killed in drug-related violence. According to the National Drug Intelligence Center, an estimated 90% of cocaine enters the United States through Mexico, and earnings from illicit U.S. drug sales now range from \$13.6 billion to \$48.4 billion annually. Gun trafficking between the United States and Mexico has also paralleled the increase in drug trafficking. U.S. officials estimate that 90% to 95% of guns used by Mexico’s drug cartels have been traced to the United States. The Mexican government has said that as many as 2,000 weapons enter Mexico daily, fueled by an arms race among the Mexican drug cartels.

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